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# ARKANSAS AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 9/13/2017**

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## Larry and Shirley Aikman of Yell County Named Forest Stewards of the Year

**LITTLE ROCK, AR** – Larry and Shirley Aikman of Bluffton have been named the 2016 Arkansas Forest Stewards of the Year by the Arkansas Forestry Commission. The Aikman family has a long history of good forest management and became certified as Forest Stewards in 2004.

The Forest Stewardship Program recognizes and rewards landowners that are managing privately owned forestland with a multi-use concept, which could include enhancement of wildlife through habitat protection and improvements, protection against soil erosion, protection of water quality, restoration and management of wetlands, and others. Arkansas is home to over 1,200 certified forest stewardship landowners.

The Aikman family’s primary management goals include healthy and valuable timber, soil and water conservation, and enhanced wildlife habitat. Their land includes pine plantations, natural shortleaf pine stands, pure hardwood bottoms, and areas with a mix of pine and hardwood species. The family’s most recent forest management efforts have included fire-line construction, controlled burns, timber harvests, and the maintenance of open forest areas for wildlife nesting space.

“It is a pleasure to work with the Aikman family. They keep up-to-date with current issues and programs and utilize federal programs to help meet forestry objectives and make improvements to property. They are managing property today for future generations,” said Yell County Forester Eric Myers.

Any private forest landowner with over 10 acres is eligible to participate in the Arkansas Forest Stewards program. Find more information, including Stewardship Program Applications, here: <http://www.aad.arkansas.gov/forest-stewardship>.

The mission of the AFC is to protect Arkansas’s forests, and those who enjoy them, from wildland fire and natural hazards while promoting rural and urban forest health, stewardship, development, and conservation for all generations of Arkansans. The AFC is a part of the Arkansas Agriculture Department.

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*The Arkansas Agriculture Department offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability and is an Equal Opportunity Employer.*

